

Ohio—"does amazing digital printings and photography. She restores old photographs into digital paintings."

Tia said: "Gemini Gems & Creations in Lancaster"—a small city southeast of Columbus—"wonderful people who started selling out of their home and during town events"—out of their home and during town events—"and now finally have their own shop."

Teresa mentioned "Chris Fultz's sign company, Fultz Signs and his pizza place, Bluelick General, in Lima."

Lima just swore in this week a new mayor, Sharetta Smith, and the mayor of Dayton, my friend Nan Whaley, attended the swearing in.

Adam mentioned the Copper Penny Salon in Pettisville.

Vickie mentioned the Charmed Farmhouse in Wellington. She said: "They take food drives and donate to those in town who directly help our community. They survived shutdown and thrive still."

Think about that: They survived and they thrive. This pandemic hit small businesses hard. For so many of them, they are still paying their workers and serving their communities because of PPP, because of our work through the American Rescue Plan to get people vaccinated.

PPP has helped Ohio businesses survive. Vaccines are bringing back customers, allowing these small businesses to thrive again.

The bipartisan infrastructure plan the President signed just last month is going to mean investment—earlier this month. Excuse me. It is going to mean investment in these businesses' local communities.

People in Ohio and across the country remember how after the last economic crisis in 2008 and 2009, the biggest corporations recovered—they always do—while large swaths of the country were left behind.

Many of these same communities have watched for decades as factories closed, as investment dried up, as storefronts were boarded over. We can't make that mistake again, and we are not making that mistake.

We are investing in rebuilding roads and bridges and bus and rail systems to revitalize downtowns. We know businesses can't survive on their own. They need safe streets and sidewalks. They need other businesses around. They need bus stops nearby. They need customers with money in their pockets.

As part of the American Rescue Plan, as I said earlier, we passed the largest tax cut for working families ever. Ninety-two percent of families in Ohio who have children under 18—92 percent of those families—will get at least a \$3,000-a-year tax cut.

It is essential that this Congress, that this Senate extend that tax cut for at least another year. It is giving millions of Ohio families that tax cut every single month—\$250 or \$300 per child every single month. We need to make sure they continue.

We need this holiday season to commit to shopping local, and in the Sen-

ate let's commit to protecting small business—putting small businesses and workers at the center of our economy.

The workers who shared these—the Ohioans who shared these stories—know the vibrancy and the dynamism and the diversity of working-class towns in neighborhoods that Senator PORTMAN, who is in the Chamber this evening—that we represent. We need to get to work to invest in them. We need to get to work to ensure that these places—Ohio's Main Streets, America's Main Streets—are at the center of a better economy.

MORNING BUSINESS

HOSSAM BAHGAT

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, in June of this year, Egyptian prosecutors opened a criminal investigation concerning human rights defender Hossam Bahgat, in relation to a December 2020 tweet criticizing Egypt's flawed parliamentary elections. The acts he has been accused of would not be considered crimes in the United States, nor in any other country that respects freedom of expression.

Hossam Bahgat is the executive director and founder of one of the most respected Egyptian human rights organizations, the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, EIPR. His work has been recognized around the world, and in April 2021, Mr. Bahgat met with Secretary of State Blinken as part of a group of leading human rights activists. Other EIPR employees have also been targeted, along with many others as part of the government's crackdown on independent civil society organizations. In February of 2020, EIPR researcher Patrick George Zaki was forcibly disappeared and reportedly tortured. A year ago, three of EIPR's senior employees, Gasser Abdel-Razek, Karim Ennarrah, and Mohamed Basheer, were also arbitrarily detained, effectively silencing them.

Mr. Bahgat faces up to 3 years in prison and almost \$20,000 in fines for reportedly doing nothing more than expressing views the Egyptian authorities consider to be "insulting" or "false news". This is not the first time Mr. Bahgat has been targeted for his courageous and important reporting. In 2015, he was detained for 3 days after reporting on officers convicted of planning a coup and was only released when the case received international attention from human rights groups and the United Nations.

I have consistently spoken out about human rights in Egypt and in other countries, especially when governments crack down on human rights activists. The State Department publicly expressed concern in July of this year. Today, I am adding my voice to others who have raised concerns about Mr. Bahgat's wrongful detention. A verdict in his case may be imminent. I hope the Egyptian Government will abandon

its persecution of Hossam Bahgat and his fellow human rights defenders. Like the Department of State, I have been urging the Egyptian authorities to make progress on human rights so our two countries can expand cooperation in other important areas. Further attempts to silence Mr. Bahgat and the other EIPR employees will needlessly impede those efforts.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. HAWLEY. Madam President, had there been a recorded vote, I would have voted no on the confirmations of Executive Calendar No. 537, Cole Finegan, of Colorado to be United States Attorney for the District of Colorado for the term of four years; No. 538, Kenneth L. Parker, of Ohio, to be United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio for the term of four years; No. 553, Cindy K. Chung, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania for the term of four years; and No. 554, Gary M. Restaino, of Arizona, to be United States Attorney for the District of Arizona for the term of four years.

SWITZERLAND

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I come to the floor today to talk about the unique partnership between the United States and Switzerland. I had the opportunity earlier this month to meet with President of Switzerland Guy Parmelin to discuss the U.S.-Switzerland partnership on apprenticeship and workforce training. Our meeting came on the heels of a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing considering the nomination of Scott Miller to be the Ambassador to Switzerland. My questioning of Mr. Miller covered many topics, to include the recent decision by the government of Switzerland and Swiss voters to purchase Lockheed Martin F-35s as their next-generation fighter jet.

In the following weeks, I have received more information on the benefits of the F-35 and the incredible opportunity this security cooperation provides for both Switzerland and the United States. In fact, prior to making a selection, the Swiss Federal Council completed a comprehensive analysis and determined that the F-35 offered the highest benefit, at the lowest cost: \$2 billion less than the next lowest bidder.

In making their choice, the Government of Switzerland and Swiss voters clearly recognized the value of the F-35, as well as the superior capabilities the F-35 offers. The deal has my enthusiastic support, and I appreciate our continued partnership with the Swiss Government and the Swiss people.